INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SERIES

Edited by G. LOWES DICKINSON

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CAUSES OF INTERNATIONAL WAR

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By

G. LOWES DICKINSON

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY AS A CONDITION OF WAR - - -	7
II	THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF WAR	15
III	WAR BETWEEN STATES - - -	25
IV	THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR WAR OF THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS IN A STATE -	61
V	REMEDIES - - - -	90
	A SHORT BIBLIOGRAPHY - -	109

FOREWORD BY THE EDITOR

THE object of this series is twofold; to disseminate knowledge of the facts of international relations, and to inculcate the international rather than the nationalistic way of regarding them. This latter purpose implies no distortion of facts. It is hoped that the books will be found to maintain a high standard of accuracy and fairness.

But their avowed object is not merely to record facts, but to present them in a certain light, and with a certain object. That light is Internationalism and that object the peace of the world. If the series is successful in its purpose it will contribute to what Wells has called the "international mind."

The object has been to produce the books at a price that shall not be prohibitive to people of small incomes. For the world cannot be saved by governments and governing classes. It can be saved only by the creation, among the peoples of the world, of such a public opinion as cannot be duped by misrepresentation nor misled by passion. The difficulties of that achievement can hardly be exaggerated, but ought not to daunt. And the editor ventures to hope for support for men of good will in this one attempt, among the many others, to enlighten the intelligence and direct the will.

Chapter I

THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY AS A CONDITION OF WAR

In discussing war, it is important to distinguish clearly what we mean by it. We do not mean anything so general as conflict or fighting or competition. We mean the deliberate use of organised physical force by groups of men against other groups. Other kinds of conflict might, and no doubt would persist in the absence of war; and to put an end to war would not be the same thing as to put an end to competitive effort. That is clear from the history of states. For within an ordered state there is peace, but none the less there is conflict.

It is necessary, also, for the purpose of this essay, to distinguish international war from civil. In some periods of history, the distinction is not easy to draw in practice. But it becomes clear as soon as sovereign states have appeared. International war is, then, war between such states;

while civil war is war between groups included in one of them. More generally, in international war the parties contending do not recognise one another as belonging to a single community; in civil war they do. These two kinds of war have many features in common, but their causes and objects are different. We confine ourselves here to the causes and objects of international war.

War, we must first insist, requires accounting for. For, on the face of it, it is not natural but strange. A quarrel, ending with a fight, between two individuals, everyone understands. The men are angry, and they want to hurt one another. But in war, none of the individuals concerned need be, and in fact, commonly, none of them are, at all angry with one another. They have no kind of personal quarrel. Insomuch that, as is well-known, in the late war, during lulls in the fighting, quite friendly relations were sometimes established between the opposing regiments and "fraternising" had to be prohibited and punished by the officers. Millions of men, for four and a half years, were engaged in killing one another, with every circumstance of cruelty, yet broadly speaking, none of them in any

way disliked the others. On the face of it, that is a very curious fact. It is the purpose of this book to enquire how it comes about.

It could not come about (this is the first point we must notice) unless man were, as he was long ago called, a "social animal." But what is meant by being a social animal? It might mean being a herd-animal, like wolves or sheep. Such animals, it is presumed, are united by a special gregarious instinct, not possessed by solitary creatures, and causing them to behave in a quite different way to these. Some think that man is such an animal, and that his coherence in groups depends on such an instinct. Others believe that the earliest men knew no larger community than the primitive family. The question is one for biologists to settle. What concerns us here is that, whatever the origin of the feeling of community, we experience it as something direct and primary, seeming to lie deeper than any reasons we may give for it. The reader may test this by observing himself (or others) when, for example, his family is insulted, or his school, or his country. Most likely he will, in the expressive phrase, "bristle all over," and

that quite immediately and uncontrollably, and without respect to the question whether or no the insult is justified by the facts. In such cases, there seems to be touched a kind of extended self, as near and dear as one's own, and near and dear without any reference to its merits. "Good or bad, it is mine, it is me"—that is what something seems to say inside one. That "something" we shall call the community-sense, and we must carry it with us in our minds as a fundamental condition of the possibility of war.

But this sense, whatever its origin, is only a kind of first matter, which receives, from a long course of living together, all sorts of forms. The customs, traditions and history of the group coalesce with it. It supports them, they shape it. An irrational feeling may thus become amalgamated with what is rational and the instinctive movement which rushes to the rescue of "my" group in danger, may present itself as a deliberate preference and choice. Thus, a man may support his instinctive rally to his group by the remembrance of deeds performed in the past by distinguished members of it, of services done to civilisation or liberty, of demonstrable

merits of one kind or another, such as a group with a long and continuous tradition is likely to be able to boast. The proportion in which these reflective and rational elements overlie the primitive feeling will differ for different groups, different individuals, and different states of civilisation. The patriotism, for instance, of a cultivated Roman of the age of the Antonines was something very different from the tribal feeling of a Frank or a Hun. But the persistence of the irrational element, even when it is most overlaid, can be detected by an outsider, in the partiality with which the member of a group estimates the excellences of that group in comparison with those of others. Commonly indeed, and in time of war invariably, even to attempt impartiality is regarded as an offence; and "my country right or wrong" is still the maxim of the great majority of patriots. Even those who condemn that attitude do, nevertheless, usually manage to bring out their country as obviously right. The fact that this is always done by both sides in a war shows that something is at work other than a sane objective judgment. That something is what we are calling the community-sense.

We have, next, to notice that, while this community-sense seems to be primitive and persistent, it has not a necessary and exclusive reference to any particular group. It is connected, to begin with, with the groups in which a person is brought up; the family, the village or town, the school, the college, the nation. These various loyalties are not incompatible with one another; on the contrary, they commonly grow up together and co-exist harmoniously. They are each the result of habits, customs, traditions and ideas co-operating with the community-sense. But also they may conflict in the most tragic way. When a person marries, for example, there may arise a clash of family loyalties. When one community is conquered by another and annexed, a new loyalty is demanded of it, incompatible with the old. The demand may or may not be met. Centuries of connection have not produced a loyalty of Ireland to Britain. On the other hand, the Boers, whom we annexed by war in 1901, were fighting side by side with us in 1914, and it is probably safe to say that those who thus fought did it as unquestioningly as the British themselves. The community-sense, it would appear, can migrate

in the most surprising way. It is, one might say, in itself, nothing more than a permanent possibility of attachment to a group. Most surprising are these migrations when conflict occurs between class-loyalty and nation-loyalty. If a revolution takes place in any country during a foreign war, it often happens that the class dispossessed of power and property makes common cause with the foreign foe. The latter, who, before, were unspeakable enemies of the human race, suddenly become saviours of civilisation ; while, on the other hand, fellow-countrymen, a moment ago brothers in a holy war, are transformed into fiends incarnate. We can study this curious phenomenon in ancient Greece, in mediæval Italy, in the France and the Russia of the revolutions. The nation-group, in such cases, is torn asunder into two class-groups, and these make war upon one another with the passion that is always developed by the community-sense whenever it is challenged by force.

Conflict, it must next be observed, seems to be necessary to evoke the full vigour of the community sense. This may be witnessed in countless instances of daily life. A football match, a boat

race, an election, excite a passion wholly irrational and wholly social. The tradition of a school, a college, a club, or even a nation, is something of which the members are very little conscious until it is challenged. A candid judgment, I think, will admit that, in time of peace, patriotism is not a motive for most citizens. They are, no doubt, living within their national tradition, as fish live in water, and would be quite different people without it. But their interest is directed to their work, their amusements, their science or their art. They are pursuing ends that have no conscious reference either to the prosperity or the credit of their country. It is only in war that patriotism becomes, for most citizens, a dominant motive. Similarly, it is only when a social class is threatened that it develops the terrible passions shown in civil war. The community-sense normally lies stagnant. A word may stir a ripple on its surface, but it requires a threat and a blow to raise a storm. And it is only when the storm is raised that we become fully aware what an inheritance we are trailing with us from a far past.

Chapter II

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF WAR

We have seen that the community-sense is a condition of the possibility of war. But it is not enough to account for war. There would be no war if there were only one community, and that not sub-divided into smaller groups. But in fact we know of no such condition. Wherever we come across men, we find them grouped in smaller or larger communities each more or less complex within itself, and each in contact with others which it regards as outsiders.

Even so, however, it is not self-evident that outsiders should be treated as enemies. Animals do not make war, pack with pack, on their own kin. Such war, outside mankind, is only known among bees and ants. It seems to be an anomaly in nature, rather than a rule. And it is questionable whether it existed among men during millenniums of their

primitive history. Early men hunted animals, but there is no evidence that they fought one another. And whereas Man may have appeared on the earth a million years ago, war, some think, does not go back more than two hundred centuries. There is no evidence for the statement, sometimes hastily made, that whenever and wherever there have been men there has been war. War more likely, came in, as, perhaps, it may go out. It is not a fatal product of human nature. It is an effect of that nature when put under certain conditions.

Nor again does it seem to be true, as is sometimes assumed, that primitive men, even at that late stage of history in which we begin to have record or observation of them, are in a condition of perpetual war. On the contrary, we not uncommonly find small groups living in loose contact, mostly in peace, but occasionally "scrapping" about some definite matter, like the poaching of one on what another claims to be its hunting ground, or the carrying off of a woman. Something like this is the earliest origin we can trace for war. But it is very different from war fully developed. The

fighting is unorganised, and it may be carried on not between whole groups but between single families within groups. The battles are anything but bloody, and an actual casualty may terminate the proceedings in general dismay and regret. It is a long step from this kind of primitive quarrel to what history knows as war, and the stages of development cannot be certainly traced in a regular series. But all the known facts suggest that economic motives were at the bottom of the process. For instance, disputes about hunting grounds are a primitive cause of fighting, where different communities are settled in the same neighbourhood. Such causes of dispute are likely to be more common and more serious where tribes in the pastoral stage of civilisation wander far over long distances between their summer and winter quarters, as, for many thousands of years, has happened in the steppes of Asia and Eastern Europe. Disputes of this kind would develop the readiness to fight, and the weapons and tactics of a rude kind of war. But further, under the precarious conditions of this kind of life, a bad season, and the perishing of beasts on a large scale,

may leave a tribe face to face with the choice between starving and stealing from others. Hence, wars for subsistence, leading on naturally to the habit of war for plunder. Such wars constitute the greater part of the history of Central Asia. Sometimes this struggle of pasturing hordes led to migration in mass, the defeated being compelled to seek a new country. And these migrations led to attacks on more civilised peoples settled, on an agricultural basis, in more fertile land—in China, for example, or Mesopotamia. It was such migrations that led to the invasions that destroyed the Roman Empire.* Quite analogous are the sea-raids that broke up the ancient civilisation of Crete, or those of the northern Vikings. In all these cases, covering many centuries of primitive war, over a great part of the earth, plunder is clearly the

* "As long as a nomad horde finds sufficient room in the steppe it does not think of migration and always returns home from its raids richly laden with plunder. But if the steppe-zone is thrown into a ferment by struggles for the winter pastures, or by other causes, the relatively weakest horde gets pushed out of the steppe and must conquer a new home outside the zone. For it is only weak against the remaining nomad hordes, but against any other state upon which it falls it is irresistible. All the nomads of history who broke into Europe, the Scythians, Sarmatians, Huns, Bulgarians, Avars, Magyars, Cumans, were the weakest in the steppes and had to take to flight, whence they became assailants of the world, before whom the strongest tottered."—*Cambridge Mediæval History*, Vol. I., p. 349.

motive; and one may say, without much fear of mistake, that that motive is the origin of war.*

This original motive war carries with it through all its developments. But, later, war was established, as it were, on its own feet, as a normal form of activity, by important social changes. To describe these in detail, would be to rewrite history. But it will be useful to call attention to two main points. First, whatever men do, necessary or unnecessary, good or evil, they put into it intelligence and will. War has been no exception, but rather a principal example. Once the practice of war began, it took on a momentum. On the one hand, an art of weapons and of their use, of tactics and strategy, was developed; on the other, a social attitude and tradition. Those nations became victorious which were able to show the greatest invention in the art of war, the most indifference to killing and being killed, and the

* Mr. W. H. Perry has put forward the rather sensational view that the very beginning of war was the conquest of peaceful peoples by adventurers bent on gold, pearls and amber, and on servile labour to produce them. On that hypothesis all war would be in the modern sense "imperialistic." See reference in the bibliography to Mr. Perry's very interesting paper. If his view were established it would more than ever show plunder as the root of war.

strongest and most tenacious acceptance of war as at once necessary and honourable. Innocent savages who burst into tears when they find they have killed an enemy, and run away when they think they may be killed themselves, stand, of course, no chance in such a competition. The settled and civilised peoples of the Roman Empire stood very little chance against the nomad Huns. Nor can the modern Chinese or Africans put up a successful fight against the white race. But the very fact that war has become the subject of an art, is an obstacle to any effective criticism of its necessity or utility. For every art becomes a purpose in itself, and resists and resents discussions that may undermine it. It is not from the makers of bows or spears, of rifles or cannon, of the poison-gasses and disease-germs which are now taking their place, that there could be expected a candid investigation of the value of their own activities. Professional and personal pride forbids it (for what are they, if their calling be discredited ?), and so does economic interest. The makers of weapons are not more likely to be tolerant of pacifists, than were the silversmiths in Ephesus of Christians.

Even more important, in the process of converting war from a plunder-raid to an institution, is the development of a special fighting class. The nomads whose activities fill so great a part in the history of war were not professional soldiers. Their wars were episodes in the business of herding their beasts. And though they would sometimes unite in great armies, under some chief of military genius, their social organisation continually tended to revert to small clans of more or less equal freemen. In some cases, however, long periods of fighting and invasion produced the segregation of a special governing and fighting class, whose tradition, occupation, and ideal was all of war. European and Japanese feudalism, so curiously alike, though never in contact, are the great examples of this development. The Teutonic tribes, from the first records we have of them, already have the practice and ideal of war. With that ideal, they invaded the Roman Empire, and in the long process of settling down transformed their whole social organisation in the way best calculated to stereotype the war-like tradition. Chiefs were converted into hereditary kings, their personal

followers into lords, and the mass of free men into vassals or serfs. There has now grown up a governing class which is also a fighting class. War is their principal business. They live by and for it, hold their land by and for it, are trained for it and for nothing else. It is their continuing interest that there should be war. And, also, it is their ideal. They think no other life worthy of a man. When they are not engaged in war, they are playing at it in jousts and tourneys, or talking about it, or hearing it sung about. Finally, all the resources of art and religion are brought to bear to consecrate their life. The warriors are grouped in Orders, blessed by the Church, and trained in the code of chivalry. War has reached its apotheosis. It has passed from being a blind necessity fallen into by primitive and hungry men to being the only purpose of life conceivable for men held to be civilised and noble.

This brief indication must suffice to put the reader on the track of the origin of war and its development. The process may be summed up as the conversion into an institution of what, to begin with, was armed robbery. The armed

robbery stage has filled an enormous space of human history, and still continues in certain parts of the world. It hung about the skirts of the early empires in Egypt and Mesopotamia and China. It sent out, from time to time, great swarms of nomads that overwhelmed these empires and settled down on the top of them, again to be overwhelmed by later swarms. Much of such war, however large in scale, did not involve fundamental social transformations among those who carried it on. They remained mere plundering hordes. But there were peoples and conditions where there developed a distinct fighting and governing class, with a tradition and ethic all of war. The feudalism of the European Middle Ages is the best known example. But we find a similar development in Japan, and something in many ways analogous in those Homeric poems which describe war in the Mediterranean region after the break-up of the old Minoan civilisation by invasions from the north. We may call this development the institutionalising of war. And it is important to note that this institutional war preceded and was inherited by the

organised states both of ancient Greece and of modern Europe.

It is war between such states with which we in our time are concerned. And our discussion and analysis of that must be fuller than our sketch of its prelude.

Chapter III

WAR BETWEEN STATES

By a state is meant a settled population living in an orderly way under an established government. Dimly we see such states growing up in the dawn of history in fertile rivers valleys, the Nile, the Tigris and Euphrates, the great rivers of China; on islands, as Crete; on strips by the sea coast like Tyre and Sidon. Our knowledge of the history of these early states is sketchy; but war is a great part of it; war either with invading nomads from land or sea, or with other states. We may pause for a moment to point out the difference in kind between these two kinds of wars. The first is the repelling of plunder raids; and while states have on their borders unsettled and uncivilised tribes, they will have to wage such war. Modern examples are a frontier war on the north-west border of India, or a war between white settlers and the tribes in the African interior. Such war is

only a prolongation of the primitive war dealt with in the last chapter. The essential and characteristic wars of states are those they wage with one another. Such wars might be called classic wars. They are those which fill the history of which we know most; in particular, the history of ancient Greece and of modern Europe.

The transition from the one period to the other may be summarised as follows. Ancient Greece, so tiny geographically, was nevertheless divided into a large number of states. The states were cities, with a little territory round them, about as big as an English county. And though all Greeks were, and recognised themselves to be, of kindred descent, yet these cities were continually at war, and it was these wars that in a very brief space destroyed their independence. After some two centuries of glorious life Greece fell under the domination first of the kingdom of Macedon, and later of the republic of Rome.

Rome too began as a city state, and her history, too, is one of continual war. But the course of it was very different from that of any Greek city. It was one long career of conquest. Rome subdued

and brought under her own political system, first her immediate neighbours, then gradually all Italy. She fought Carthage for the empire of the west, and Macedon and Egypt and the princes of Asia for that of the east. She extended her rule over the savage tribes of Gaul and Britain and north Africa till her frontiers at last reached the Rhine and the Danube, Mesopotamia and the mountains of Armenia. For once in its long turbulent history, Western Europe and the Near East rested under a single rule, and cultivated men dreamt of a perpetuity of peace. But this Roman Empire, vast though it was, covered, after all, but a very small part of the eastern hemisphere. Outside, to north and east, wandered warlike tribes. And it was these, breaking through, in the fourth and following centuries, that destroyed the Roman state, without being able for centuries to establish any other. Hence the long anarchy on which we touched in the last chapter. When it subsided, it was not one state that emerged, but, as before in Greece, many states. Renaissance Italy reproduced almost precisely the conditions of that old Greek world. The rest of Europe separated off

into larger states under kings, and by the sixteenth century the international conditions to which we are accustomed were already in the main established. Europe was a world of country-states, as Greece had been a world of city states; and Europe, like Greece, was continually at war.

It is this war between states that is specifically meant by international war, which would be better called interstate war. And only when men are definitely grouped into states is the distinction quite clear between civil war and that other kind with which we are here concerned. Interstate war is between states, civil war within states.

But then, why do states wage war with one another? There are not, on the face of the matter, the same causes or reasons for war that we discovered in the last chapter. The communities engaged are settled, not nomad, they live by agriculture and commerce and the arts; they have laws, constitutions, a whole tradition and practice of orderly civil life; they are on much the same level of civilisation; they have many kinds of pacific intercourse; they form alliances with one another; they have (in ancient Greece and in modern

Europe) a common religion, a common art, a common literature. They do not habitually live by plundering one another; and if their population becomes excessive they have a recognised practice of orderly emigration and colonisation. Why then should they fight one another? It is not sufficient to say that they have disputes. For disputes need not be adjusted by war, and very often are not, even between states. In the retrospect it appears plainly that it is their interest not to wage war. For the wars between Greek States destroyed the political independence of them all, subjected them first to Macedon and then to Rome, and made their history as brief and tragic as it was brilliant. The wars between the Italian states of the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance resulted, in a similar way, in the reduction of a great part of Italy under a foreign yoke, and the subsidence of what remained Italian into political, intellectual and moral stagnation. And the wars of modern Europe? Well, let the reader look about him and consider. Wars between States clearly need accounting for. Let us try to give the account.

First, then, we must remind ourselves that states, at any rate in the examples of which we know most, have emerged out of earlier conditions, all of war. Thus they carry with them from the beginning both a community-sense directed upon war, and a habit and art of war. They start in as an armed pack, and develop, instead of getting rid of, this original bias. Let us sketch this development.

First, the community-sense, as we have called it, takes, among the citizens of states, the specific form of patriotism. It would be pedantic and misleading, in a matter concerning feelings, to draw hard and fast distinctions. But broadly, it may be said, with sufficient truth, that patriotism, in its complete development, is only possible in states. The members of a primitive wandering tribe are, presumably, bound together by something much less conscious and elaborate—by an almost animal feeling that they belong together. The vassals of a feudal lord are bound to him by personal loyalty. But the members of a state are united by patriotism.*

* For the sake of clearness I have not paused in this place to draw the important distinction between a state and a nation, but write as though all the citizens of a state shared in the patriotism

This patriotism is based upon the primitive community-sense. A common language and religion, common customs and habits give to this sense its local habitation, in which the citizens dwell naturally as in a home. But this feeling of at-one-ness is not yet patriotism. Patriotism is conscious and is inculcated. It depends upon bringing to the mind of the citizen, by whatever educational means present themselves, the past history and achievement of the state. Such history may be true or false, but it must be moving, and movingly presented. Often it has included legends of a common descent from a heroic or divine ancestor. Always it has included stories of war, of danger faced in common and overcome. Patriotism, thus, is bound up with war and religion, and these latter are bound up together. For whatever private religion individuals or groups or churches may profess, the public religion is always one that allows and justifies war, and the official priests of it war-patriots. Further, as has already

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of it. This is not true, in the case of " empires " where some of the citizens belong to a nationality retained inside the state against its will, like the Egyptians or the Irish in the British Empire, or the Germans in the new Czecho-Slovak state.

been remarked, it is especially in time of war that patriotism flourishes. For, first, it is a form of that primitive community sense, which (as we have seen) flames up most fiercely in conflict. And next, its traditions are mainly of war. This connection between patriotism and war the reader may test by the actual history of states. It is in time of war, he will find, that the members most closely hang together. In time of peace class antagonisms assert themselves, often to the point of civil war. Rarely, if ever, has patriotism inspired a social class to abandon important privileges and interests for the sake of the good of the whole community. In Greece this almost never occurred, revolutions there being commonly accomplished by civil war and often with the help of a foreign foe. Rome, in the earlier period of the republic, was wiser and more patriotic, and for that reason succeeded better than any Greek state had done. But even so the principal concessions of patricians to plebeians were wrung by a general strike against war when the foreign foe was at the gate. Broadly it is true that patriotism is a force effective only for war. To say then that the

citizens of a state are patriotic is to say that they make war. Whether there might be some community-feeling operative with equal energy in a world at peace, may be matter for speculation. But if there were, it would be something different from what we call patriotism.

Next, we must note that states start as communities of armed men, and therefore as a possible menace to other communities. The importance of this fact cannot be exaggerated. In the first place it creates suspicion. One who *can* attack always *may* attack; and assurances that arms are only for defence will never be convincing. Thus every state will seek to be stronger than others, if only in order to feel safe, and by so seeking will itself become an object of fear to those others. The fear will be proportioned to the menace of the armaments. Under modern conditions, with the perpetual development of new means of offence and the tremendous advantage of a sudden attack on a state insufficiently prepared, the fear becomes so intense that the mere existence of armaments is enough to provoke war. For a state or an alliance of states that thinks itself, for the moment, in an

advantageous position is tempted to precipitate the war which all parties regard as inevitable, in order to to make sure of victory. Thus armaments, even if they were honestly maintained only for defence, would tend to produce what they are supposed to obviate. And there is no idea more illusory than that still generally held that the best way to avoid war is to prepare for it.

A state, then, is armed patriotism. But it is something more. In relation to other states, it is armed egotism. Its members regard it as a kind of super-person. And the primitive instincts and feelings that centre about real personalities are artificially transferred to it. Its "life" or "existence," men say, is threatened; its "honour" outraged; it is capable of being insulted; it demands "reparation." These metaphors would of course, have no power if they were not working upon the community-sense heightened into patriotism. But they have also a further significance. Through them individual citizens are able to find an outlet for the primitive emotion which social needs and rules check and thwart in the ordinary relations of life. The state thus

becomes an immense reservoir, into which are poured the otherwise balked egotisms of its members. In one sense, it is true, they sacrifice these to the State. But in another, they satisfy them in it. All that an ordered society inhibits—the blow for a blow, the being judge in one's own cause, the exaction of one's own remedies and one's own revenge,—all this, repressed in disputes between individuals by the cold arbitrament of justice, comes back a million-fold enhanced when one state deals with others. The duel is forbidden. How much the more delightful, when one's state has been insulted, to send a challenge! Theft is forbidden. How much the more satisfying to steal with impunity from the foreigner! Power over one's fellow-citizens is limited by law. How much the more intoxicating its unrestricted use against the members of another society! And all this, not merely without a bad conscience, but with a good one; approved by oneself, approved by one's whole people! For whatever a state does its members (at any rate, the bulk of them) regard as done justly and righteously. They do not say (unless they be unusually candid and brutal) "We

seek power." They say "We seek the Right." They do not say "We seek markets or plunder." They say "We seek to civilise backward populations." They do not say "We are angry and want to hit out." They say "We have to vindicate our honour." But this honour is always found to be indistinguishable from prestige; prestige from power; power from interest.* The state is egotism incarnate, unblushing, proud of itself. And in that huge egotism the citizens find more than compensation for the sacrifice, even it may be to death, of the egotism of their own individualities.

The State being thus not only armed patriotism but armed egotism it is, in fact, generally true that armaments exist as much for offence as for defence. At almost any moment in history, in a political world of states, the student will find that some one or more of these is not merely believed to be, but is,

* This word "honour" has recently been discussed by an American writer, Leo Perla, in a volume entitled "What is National Honour?" (Macmillan, 1918). He has brought together a long list of passages where the word is used by patriots and statesmen. And the reader will find, if he turns to them, that there is hardly a case where "honour" means anything except power or (what is regarded as the outwork of power) prestige. On national honour see also Veblen "On the Nature of Peace," p. 27 *seq.*

a menace to its neighbours. For it is trying to get something which it can only get by taking it away from others.

What is this object thus pursued by the egotism of states? It is the simplest and crudest conceivable, that which is at the root of all animal life, and which it is the object of human discipline to temper, restrict and divert to higher aims; namely the maintenance and increase of material power. In an individual, this means the nourishment and growth first of his body, then of his possessions, then of his influence. In the state it means the extension of its territory and of its subjects. There may be, no doubt, states that are, in fact, too weak to pursue this object and yet continue to exist by the grace and self-interest of more powerful neighbours. Such are the small states of contempory Europe, so hated and despised by Treitschke. These are maintained only because, and so long as, the greater states choose. How precarious such existence is the whole history of the Low Countries shows. Their greater neighbours have always wanted to eat them up, and been restrained only by their jealousy of one another.

The same is true of the small states in the Balkans. They have subsisted because, and so long as, more powerful states were not yet ready to test by war which of them should swallow them up. More usually, small and weak states are destined to be brought by force under the power of great ones, as happened, for instance, when Macedon swallowed up Greece, Rome Macedon, Prussia Hanover, Great Britain the Boer republics. The small non-expanding state, preserved under a "balance of power" has been a rare and exceptional phenomenon in history. The rule is that states, all the time, are trying to expand, and either succeeding and becoming empires, or failing and becoming subject, or maintaining a precarious balance of power.

In this competition of states there occur episodically wars "for Liberty." It is important to notice this fact, because it is such wars, and their famous battles—Marathon and Thermopylæ, Magenta and Solferino—that connect war with idealism. But there could be no liberation without servitude. Deliverance always postulates oppression, and a righteous war an unrighteous one. The

essence of the activity of states is the pursuit of power by violence, the accident is the hit-back of the weaker against the stronger. Of the truth of this the reader may convince himself by noting how commonly in history a nation that has liberated itself sets out immediately to conquer others. For example, no sooner had Athens defeated the Persians than she built up an empire of her own and aimed at the conquest of the Mediterranean world. No sooner had Spain expelled the Moors than she set out to secure the hegemony of the two hemispheres. No sooner had England defeated the Armada than she was knocking at the gates of India and America. No sooner had France become mistress in her own house, than she began to aim at the mastery of Europe. At the moment of this writing examples are before us even more arresting. There is hardly one of the new States called into life by the victory of the Allies that is not coercing under its rule large alien populations and openly aspiring to a career of power. The new Hellas is to be, in the words of its greatest statesman "great and rich and powe.ful, corresponding to the highest flights of our national

aspirations."* "I do not fear being reproached for urging force" says a Czech patriot "for the Czechs were the conquerors and the German Bohemians the conquered who must bear the consequences of their defeat."† The new Poland is already making war‡ to recover its former empire, though that comprises more than ninety per cent. of non-Poles. All these states have introduced conscription; all are thinking, from the first, not how they may repair the ravages of war and give to their unfortunate people a new and free and prosperous life, but how they may extend their territories by further aggression.

In this complicated process of power-hunting it is hardly possible to distinguish defensive and offensive action. For any expansion of power may be regarded as defensive, since, obviously, the stronger you are, the less open to successful attack. It is the same principle of insatiability as that which makes men strive continually to increase their fortune. The bigger it is, they feel, the safer they

* M. Venizelos cited in Oakes and Mowatt *The Great European Treaties of the Nineteenth Century*, p. 112.

† Cited in *Foreign Affairs*, April, 1920, p. 2.

‡ June, 1920.

are. They are on an inclined plane, and if they don't move up, they will slip down. So with States. If they are not advancing, they think they will be retrograding. There is usually a great deal of argument, in the case of any given war, as to who was the immediate aggressor. But such argument really is as otiose as it is inconclusive. While States continue to exist in the relations in which they always have existed, they will all be always at once on the offensive and the defensive, except those weaker ones that may be kept in a stationary condition by a kind of vassalage to the powerful.

Now, while these conditions continue, no equilibrium can be other than transitory. For an equilibrium is maintained by alliances and understandings. But these, as all history shows, are temporary and precarious, depending on the relative strength, at any moment, of all the competitors, none of whom is held to its allies by any other principle than that of self-interest, and any of whom may therefore be detachable, if, and when, the conditions of its interest change. The history of states illustrates this throughout, and nowhere

illustrates anything contrary to it. Under such circumstances, the only hope of reaching a stable position would be the domination of all the states by one. It was this that Rome achieved, for a period, in the Mediterranean world, and this that Napoleon aimed at in Europe. But the instinct and passion of all states is against this solution, so that, in Europe as in ancient Greece, it has always been defeated. Europe may indeed some day be dominated. But it would have to be by a Slav or Mongol conqueror. There remains the possibility of a permanent union of equals in peace, but without domination. But that possibility presupposes the abandonment of the power-motive by all the states concerned. It is an object of these pages to demonstrate that that abandonment is a necessary condition of peace.

In the universal pursuit of power various motives and objects may be distinguished. Thus, first, you may make war on a powerful rival, frankly because, if you don't destroy him, he will destroy you. The wars of Rome and Carthage are the typical case of this. The world, these states thought, was not big enough for them both ; and historians approve and

applaud. " Delenda est Carthago," and Carthage actually was razed to the ground by the triumphant Romans. It would be foolish, would it not, to enquire seriously whether Rome or Carthage was the aggressor ? This Rome-Carthage position was reproduced (in the minds of soldiers, statesmen and journalists) between England and Germany before the war of 1914. When the war broke out Germans compared it to a Punic war ; and it was, they thought, only the first of these. The English were more chary of historical analogies. But it was the English who won. And though they did not reiterate " Delenda est Germania " Germans and Austrians must be thinking that their behaviour is much the same as if they had. Not much, it would seem, has changed in the relations between states during the two thousand years of the Christian era.

Apart, however, from direct attack on a rival in order to destroy, it, states may be driven into war by the desire to secure a safe frontier. Classical examples are the Roman Empire and the British Empire in India. The trouble is that no frontiers are final. Rivers are little use. Mountains are

not much better ; the Alps, for instance, have never served to preserve Italy from invasion, nor the Hindu Kush to preserve India. It may always be, or seem to be, a little safer to descend into the plain on the other side of the Range. To secure your frontiers you must fight a series of frontier wars ; and in the end probably swallow up weak buffer states or fighting tribes that lie between you and another empire. Thus, before the war of 1914, by progressive advances from both sides, the Russian and British empires had come into contact across the prostrate body of Persia. Examples abound. Poland has no natural frontiers ; she will claim very likely some day that she must advance to the Urals and to Berlin and Vienna. The British in the Mesopotamia they are annexing, have no natural northern frontier. They will try no doubt to get to the Caucasus and the Caspian. Are these manœuvres offensive or defensive ? Your answer depends entirely upon the side of the frontier from which you survey the question. Again, you are a landlocked state, and your access to the sea is at the mercy of neighbour states. These states may indeed put no obstacle in your way. But then,

they always could, if they liked, and they sometimes do. Their superior position gives them an advantage in a dispute. And, anyhow, to the patriotic mind, it is intolerable that that great "person" one's state should lie in ignominious dependence on another such person. As well be a slave, cries the natural man. Hence, wars to get to the sea. That such access is not really necessary to the prosperity of a state is shown by the case of Switzerland. No matter! Serbia must have her port. Poland must have her port. They could not "exist" otherwise. And so, Hungary must be cut off from the sea, since she is the vanquished, and German territory be cut across by a Polish "corridor." How promising these arrangements are for the future peace of the world, if current policies and ideas are to continue to prevail, it is hardly necessary to set forth.

Just as landlocked states desire to reach the sea, so do sea-going states desire to control narrow waters, for they want a free passage for their trade and their war-ships. That is why the British are at Gibraltar, and show no signs of moving from it. That is why the bottle-neck that forms the entrance

to the Baltic is of so great concern both to England and to Germany. That is why the Suez and the Panama Canals are of world-wide interest. The control of such waters has been, and may be again, the occasion of wars. Does anyone suppose, for example, that if Spain were strong she would acquiesce in the British control of the straits? We took it by force, and we hold it by force. Again we annexed Egypt, in part at least, in order to have a hold on the Suez Canal. And the building and control of the Panama Canal bid fair, at one time, to involve us in serious trouble with America.

The proceedings we have been considering, imply, of course, the continual annexation by war of new territory. In such cases, is the territory itself part of the object, or only an accidental result in the carrying out of a policy? Such questions are hardly asked by those responsible for the conduct of States. But very often the acquisition of territory for its own sake is the whole object of a war. Territory is desired for various reasons. At times when the State is identified with its ruler, as in the East under its great conquerors or in the West, for many centuries of the Christian era, the

ruler annexes territory as a landlord buys up estates. It increases his " property " (for it is so that he regards his kingdom or his empire) and by so doing his sense of power and splendour. Much of human history has been directed by this kind of personal ambition. But, unfortunately, the desire to annex territory is not confined to monarchs and emperors, or we might have got rid of it with their disappearance. Contemporary states still pursue that ambition with an avidity and a determination unsurpassed by any absolute ruler. What are their motives ?

One motive is the very elementary one, that they want to increase the number of their conscript soldiers in order to hold what they have, or to acquire more. This motive has been frankly avowed by the statesmen of the country which professes to stand at the head of western civilisation. M. Caillaux, in his defence of his policy at the time of the crisis of 1911, explains that his object, and the object of his predecessors, in their colonial policy, was to redress the weakness of France in Europe by acquiring population and territory in Africa. " The statesmen of whom

we have spoken took up once more the policy of ancient Rome, poor in Roman citizens, rich in subjects, supplying the absence of Latin soldiers by Gaulish, Iberian or Numidian legions. Colonial expansion became the complement, or rather the buttress of their general policy. It gave France the material power, the necessary weight required for her affirmations of Right in Europe."*

That this really is the point of view of the governing class in France is proved by the fact that, since the war, they have introduced conscription into their African colonies, so that the episode at which all Europe that has a blush left in it is blushing—the occupation of Goethe's home at Frankfurt by black troops—may be taken to be only one illustration of a definite policy. The "civilisation" of natives means, we see, in this case, the conversion of them into conscript soldiers.† If France persists in her policy, it will almost certainly be adopted by other states, and

* Joseph Caillaux. "Ma politique extérieure," p. 6.

† And what that means may be gathered from the following account by Henri Barbusse :

"We know the methods adopted to fetch them out of their own country. We know how they have been torn from their natural life by armed raids and incendiary fires, to be carried off into captivity and thrust into barracks, to be slaughtered by being used in attacks made in open country where masses of them

especially by Great Britain. We have enormous populations capable of conversion into coloured troops; and if war is to continue we shall no doubt so convert them. So that, in the twentieth century, we may find the world still involved in the old circle—"because we have extended our empire, we must have soldiers to defend it; we must therefore extend it still further, in order to acquire the soldiers." To such madness do false ideas and politics conduct states.

It is not, however, in recent years, the military motive which has been the main one in driving states to acquire territory by force. The main

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perish, to die of cold and of diseases, which they did the more easily since their suffering awakened no echoes and they themselves hardly knew how to explain their troubles.

"How many—while I was at the front—have I not seen die of consumption, exhaustion, and melancholy, poisoned by our northern fogs, collapsing little by little like mere things, deprived of that southern sun which they needed.

"On the Riviera, where the rich enjoy all the subtleties of luxury and live princely lives, I have seen these unhappy blacks herded like animals in a pen. The arms of many of them were marked by weals from the ropes with which they had been tied to bring them from their country and to prevent them, once landed in Europe, from running away. Many of them committed suicide from wretchedness and through pining for their own land.

"All this has not prevented the pernicious Jingo Press from exalting the heroism of the traders in black flesh, whose energies had secured this additional number of soldiers for the home country, or from lavishing praise upon the clever manœuvres which enabled us to benefit from the sacrifice of the black troops." —From a letter in *Foreign Affairs*, June, 1920.—Special Supplement, p. 8.

motive has been economic. The development of modern industry has created an ever-increasing demand, in western states, for raw materials, cheap labour to extract them, and markets wherein to sell the manufactured goods. The raw materials lie very largely in Africa and Asia; iron, for instance, in Morocco, oil in Mesopotamia and Persia, rubber in West and Central Africa. The cheap labour is on the spot, once the natives have been turned off the land and prevented from living in any other way than by working at a nominal wage for white masters. The markets are where the natives are, if a demand can be created. Driven by these impulses, the principal European states, especially since the eighties of the last century, have been annexing enormous tracts in Africa and Asia. The consequences of this policy to the native populations belongs to another discussion. What concerns us is, that this was one of the causes, and perhaps the principal cause, of the late war. The notion, true or false, of making greater profit by monopolising the resources of undeveloped countries has taken hold of the minds of statesmen and merchants

and manufacturers; so that it has come to seem that the wealth and prosperity of any state depends on the amount of territory it can annex to its own flag, thereby securing the power to exploit it exclusively in its own interest. On that assumption, war is the only issue of the rivalry of states, for whatever one takes, the others, it is thought, lose; and it comes to be regarded as a matter of "life and death" that (let us say) the legacy of the Turkish Empire should fall rather to one's own state than to another.

Hence, at bottom, and in the last analysis, the great war; and hence war after war in the future, if the same ideas are to continue to govern the policy of states. That they do in fact govern them, even after the experience through which the world has passed, is shown by the peace treaties with Germany and with Turkey. The victorious states have pursued, in both cases, a policy of dividing the spoils, and they hardly attempt to make a secret of the fact that a main motive of their annexations is the cornering of economic resources.

Our answer, then, to the question why states make war is, because they pursue political and

economic power. The answer is so completely borne out by the whole course of history that it cannot be seriously disputed. But some mitigating and modifying considerations may be adduced, and must be touched upon here.

The process of extending power, it is often observed, is also one of extending " civilisation " ; and it is commonly justified, after the event, on that ground. By " civilisation " is meant a state of things better than that which preceded the conquest. And it must be remarked, to begin with, that not all conquests are, in that sense, civilising. Nobody thinks that the conquests of the Huns or of the Turks were. Many doubt whether the conquest of the Roman Empire by the barbarians was. And history, perhaps, will take a different view of the conquest of Africa and Asia by the West from that which the West itself generally takes now. To appraise the good and the evil involved in these great world-events is perhaps beyond any human capacity. It certainly cannot be attempted here in a parenthesis. But what must be said, because it is true and relevant, is, that never has any state made any conquest in

order to benefit the people concerned, and not in order to benefit itself. The motives for conquest have invariably been those outlined in the previous pages. Later on, no doubt, a sense of responsibility to the conquered has sometimes developed and much has been done which may fairly be regarded as disinterested, whether or no it has been beneficial. But if, and when, that has happened, it does not affect our analysis. States conquer by war in order to secure or extend their power. If it were otherwise, every state would be as much pleased to see "backward" races being civilised by other states as by themselves. Are they, in fact? Has any state ever looked with satisfaction on the annexation of any territory by another state, even though, according to all the current assumptions, it should be to the advantage of the "natives" concerned to be thus civilised by force? It is not the process of civilisation in general which states admire and approve. It is the process of civilisation by themselves. For each thinks that it alone has the capacity of civilising. The French, at the moment of this writing, are intervening in Syria as a civilising power. The fact that the Syrians are

fighting them to escape from that process does not affect them. But they would feel it to be monstrous if the civilising mission should be taken from them and handed over to Great Britain. Great Britain, on the other hand, shows no enthusiasm whatever for the process of French penetration. Is that because we do it so well and the French so badly? The French do not think so. And we are hardly good judges in our own cause. We think we are the best civilising power, because we are we, not because of the evidence. Plainly, we are not capable of estimating the evidence impartially; and most of us do not even trouble to know what the evidence is.

"Civilisation" is a result of conquest. On the other hand, "liberation" is the undoing of conquest. And states have sometimes liberated subject populations. That is so. But, in the first place, no state has ever liberated its own subjects, given them, that is, complete political independence. The self-governing dominions of the British Empire may be adduced in contravention of this. It may be said that, if they desired independence, we should have to grant it. Perhaps, nay probably, we should. A leading British

statesman recently asserted that we should. But the reply was made, in a prominent liberal newspaper, that it would depend on circumstances. We might acquiesce in the independence of Canada or Australia or New Zealand. But we might fight against that of South Africa. No one can say, and most people will hope that the situation will not arise. But in any case, the example is irrelevant, for the population of the Dominions is not subject. Look, on the other hand, at Ireland. There is a nation that has been rebelling against British rule for centuries past. At this moment we are coercing it by methods not easily distinguishable from those we have denounced so passionately when employed by other states. And no one, with the doubtful exception of the Labour Party, is prepared to give this population independence. The reasons are, partly a division of feeling in Ireland itself, partly the pride of dominion, but more specifically, strategical necessities. In other words, we think it right to govern by force a subject people in order to guard our own safety. Egypt is another case in point. A principal reason why we took Egypt, and will not let it go, is that we may control the

route to India. The British State is thoroughly determined never to release a subject population so long as its own power and wealth depend, or seem to depend, on holding that population down. And, of course, all other states are the same. It is only *other peoples' subject nationalities* that states are prepared to liberate, and then only when it seems to be to their own advantage to do so.

Let the reader consider, for, instance, the history of the dealings of the Powers with the Balkan peoples during the past century. As a result of a series of wars all those peoples have won their independence, except so far as some of them are still oppressing populations belonging in race or sentiment to others. And they have won it with the help or acquiescence of one or another of the great States. Nevertheless, if the history be followed in detail, it will be seen that the Balkan agony was prolonged for decades by the jealousies of these states, and their pre-occupation with the balance of power. The Turkish Empire was an estate, upon which all of them were casting covetous eyes and all were afraid of precipitating its fall in a way, and at a time, which would give

advantage to a rival claimant. It was this situation that drew out, through long years, the Greek struggle for freedom. Russia was willing to intervene effectively, but France and England feared her intervention. The governments of these states were thinking much more of the advance of Russia in Asia and Europe than of the sufferings of the Greek population. The battle of Navarino was received by both with embarrassment. And their efforts were directed to making the territory liberated as small as possible, for fear the new state should come under Russian hegemony. Later, the same determination to check the expansion of Russia led, first to the Crimean War, then to the British intervention in 1878, and the substitution of the treaty of Berlin for that of San Stephano, then to the long duel between Russia and Austria, which prevented for decades any settlement at all. For all these intrigues and delays the wretched population paid in new massacres and oppressions. And it was not till they took matters into their own hands that they won their freedom, while the protecting Powers looked on. Even then, the rivalries of Russia, Austria and Italy vitiated the

settlement, and the great war of 1914 was, in one of its aspects, only the war over the Balkans that had been so long and so vainly postponed.

Next, let us take the case of Italy. Two other states intervened actively to assist the Italians in their struggle for liberation. One was France, the other Prussia. In the case of France it may fairly be supposed that one motive of Napoleon III was a belief in the principle of nationality and a desire to establish it. But not for nothing! If France was to intervene, French power must profit. And France accordingly came off with the booty of Nice and Savoy. On the other hand, the same France, immediately after, did her best to prevent the liberation of Naples from the Bourbon tyranny. In the case of Prussia, no one will accuse Bismarck of idealistic aspirations. It suited him to have Italy to assist him in settling accounts with Austria, and he was willing to pay the price of Italian liberation, in order to mark a step on the road of Prussian aggrandisement, and the unification of Germany. These examples, it will be admitted, do not conflict with our general account of the policy of states.

But, it may be said, at any rate the war of 1914 was disinterested. It was waged, among other things, for the rights of small nations. Among other things, yes! But the other things were the determining ones. For every state that entered the war the primary object was its own security and power. Take, first, the defence of Belgium. It has been, for centuries, a cardinal principle of British policy to prevent by force the occupation of the Belgian coast by a power that might be dangerous to Great Britain. Hence our intervention. But even apart from the invasion of Belgium we should have gone to war, as Sir Edward Grey made perfectly plain, in order to protect France, to whom, in fact, we were pledged. But this pledge was entered into for our own interest. It was part of the system of maintaining the balance of power.

After their victory, when the victors had it in their power to apply their avowed principle, they took case to apply it only where it would strengthen themselves and their allies, and weaken their late enemies. A great Poland was created, to hem in Germany in the east. A great Jugo-Slavia and Czecho-Slovakia to threaten her on the south.

But when the application of the principle of nationality might have strengthened enemy states, then it succumbed to the other consideration, power. Thus, first the four million Germans of Bohemia were forced against their will under the domination of their secular enemies, the Czechs. And, secondly, the Germans of Austria were forbidden to join the Germans of Germany, and condemned by that fact, to the complete ruin in which they are involved, the city of Vienna, for centuries a centre of high civilisation, being condemned to slow and inevitable destruction. All this was done because states, as always, were thinking not of Right, but of power.*

* General Smuts, who took part in drawing up the Peace Treaties, has referred to the Peace Conference as a "seething cauldron of human greed and passion." Lord Robert Cecil has said: "Anyone who has had any personal experience of that strange body will desire anything rather than a renewal of its deliberations." (Hansard, H.C., 14th April, 1920, v. 127, p. 1747.)

Against the judgment passed in the text on the Peace Treaties it may be objected that no account has been taken of the Covenant of the League. That is for a reason. We are concerned here with causes of war, and therefore, with the evidence, only too conspicuous, that the purposes and ideas that cause war are still operative in the minds of statesmen and their nations. That there are signs of a reaction against these purposes and ideas, is a principal hope for the future, and the most notable sign is the Covenant of the League.

Chapter IV

THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR WAR OF THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS IN A STATE

Historians and others, considering the general facts outlined in the preceding pages, have been apt to regard the whole process as what they call "inevitable." In one sense, of course, everything that has happened was inevitable, since it happened. It may also be that everything is predetermined. But that is not what is meant when it is said that war is inevitable. What is meant is that no human deliberation or choice can affect the matter, one way or the other. What we have described as power-policies these thinkers describe as the "expansion" of states. They treat this expansion as analogous to that of water when it turns into steam, and think it equally foolish to attempt to check the one or the other. This way of thinking comes from talking always about States and Countries and Nations, and never about men

and women. For convenience it is necessary so to talk, but there is an evident danger that the words will be converted into things, and States come to be conceived as kind of super-beings which dictate the conduct of their citizens, instead of being, as they are, a mere result of that conduct. Whatever policies states have ever pursued have been the policies of those individual persons who, at the moment, were acting for the states. These persons, again, have been influenced both by the tradition of what other such persons have done before them, and by the general opinion of the citizens of the state or some of them. The whole matter depends on the views held, the passions felt, and the purposes pursued by a number of individual people. To change policy, is to change those views, passions and purposes. And to say that that cannot be done is to beg the question. In truth the very same people who say it are likely to say, in the next breath, that the whole outlook of the German people was radically transformed by education during the last half of the nineteenth century. Unless we are prepared to assert that no experience and no instruction can have any effect upon the human mind, we

cannot deny the possibility of such a change in human motives as may put an end to international war. But if we are to affect these motives, we must know what they are, in whom they subsist and how they are maintained and propagated. In other words we must inquire into the responsibility of different elements in states for the maintenance of that power-idea that leads to war.

This inquiry is very difficult and complicated. What is true of one period of history and of one state will not be altogether true of others. We must confine ourselves here to what is most important for us, contemporary conditions, and among them, to those which are generally applicable to all states.

First, then, there is the responsibility of Governments. It is not sole, but it is chief and primary, and that as much, hitherto, in democratic as in autocratic states. For, whatever the form of government, foreign policy in all countries has been conducted by Foreign Offices, and in secrecy. Nor does there seem to be, at present, in most countries, any desire or intention to alter that arrangement. Even in countries like our own, where ministers and the diplomatic services are

nominally responsible to a representative assembly, the permanent officials of the Foreign Office have enormous influence. They have the records, the information, the long experience, the tradition, the prestige, the social connections. They form, taken all together, in all states, a kind of diplomatic International, with the solidarity of a professional class. They spring from the well-to-do; for the Foreign Offices have been jealously preserved for the rich, even where other public posts have been thrown open to competition. Thus, they have associated, since their birth, exclusively with people who have never known what poverty, or (in many cases) what work is. The world outside presents itself to them as a kind of raw material, sometimes inert, sometimes recalcitrant, which it is their natural mission to keep and direct on the accustomed lines. Public opinion, like politicians, is a nuisance to be circumvented. Foreign Policy is the concern of Foreign Offices, and it must be governed by the traditional principles. These, of course, are those of power-policy. The reading of history, at school and university, has already taught the young diplomat that all the history of

states, in their relations to one another, is a contest for power, and that it is nothing more. Every record and document in the office, every treaty, every correspondence, confirms that view. Every conversation with official superiors presupposes and reinforces it. Every step taken is an example, every despatch an admonition of it. The world to whose inmost secrets the aspirant is gradually introduced, is one where no other view of affairs is even conceivable. The material with which diplomats deal is armed competition. Secrecy and intrigue is the atmosphere they breathe. Or, if they come out into the open, to bargain or to threaten, what they offer, in friendship or hostility, is always an army and a navy. These are the cards without which they could not play their game. So that war, sooner or later, is the presupposition of their whole activity.

They may, of course, and very likely often do, in a general and abstract view, consider war to be an evil. But they are bound to regard it as an evil inevitable; as indeed it is, granted the situation they at once suffer and create, and the assumptions within which their whole life and thought moves.

But an evil believed to be inevitable is one which must not be too particularly contemplated. For at any moment it may be necessary to precipitate it on the world, and one must be sure to have the nerve to do this with courage. It is better, therefore, while admitting that war is an evil, and, of course, doing what is reasonably practicable to obviate it, for as long a time as is possible or convenient, not to let oneself dwell upon it. But, not dwelt upon, it becomes, to diplomats, as to the general public, a mere word without real content. And even when it breaks out and reveals itself for what it is, since these gentlemen do not go to the front, since they do not really bear and suffer war, as the millions must do whom they have flung into it, they are not unduly disturbed, when all is over, by the price that has been paid. Has their country been defeated? Well, that was the soldiers' fault. Has it been victorious? How well, then, the diplomats must have planned! The infinite unimaginable suffering, the degradation of all life, the economic ruin, the setback of progress, the plain fact that nothing whatever has been gained to compensate for all these losses, all that drops

out of the mind, because it has never been assimilated by it. The great game has been played once more, and the board is to be set for a new contest. It is the business of the diplomat first, in the peace settlement, to make the situation as favourable for his own side as possible, and then to play the old game with a new skill. The vanquished, with good luck and brains, may recover their position. The victor must try to maintain his. That is all. The tradition emerges unbroken and, really, in the minds of these men, unchallenged. If the reader have any doubt of this, let him consider the series of treaties, all made in close contact and consultation with the diplomatic class, made during and after the great war to end war. Let him examine, carefully and impartially, the presumptions underlying them. He will see, to demonstration and beyond all dispute, that the territorial and economic arrangements have been dictated by the principle of Power, and that a few score men, working in the dark, have been able in cold blood, and (no doubt) with a perfectly good conscience, to defeat the hope and aspiration for permanent peace of the millions who have died, and the millions who

remain to mourn them, to doff aside as an idle dream the cause for which the masses gave their lives, and to reinstate themselves, their hopes, their fears, their ambitions, their unbeliefs, as the governing factor in an international life arranged to lead, as before, to a fresh and even more terrible catastrophe. And, let it be understood, all this has happened not because these are bad men. Most likely they are good and conscientious men. They are, at any rate, what would commonly be thought "nice" men, cultivated, charming, dilettantes of literature and art. Yes! But they are imbued, not through their own fault, with a false tradition and they have never been close enough to reality to correct it. It is impossible for such men to make a good peace, for they are incapacitated from believing in peace.

Or will it be urged that nobody wanted a better peace? This is palpably untrue. For the Labour organisations of every country, during the war and after the armistice, had put forward definite proposals for a peace on quite other lines. They had asked for real self-determination for all oppressed nationalities. They had asked for no annexations

and no indemnities. They had asked for a true League of Nations, in which all states should be, from the outset, included. Does any one doubt that, if a congress of socialists had made the peace, it would have been a different peace? As it is, not a single representative of the working class was present at the Peace Conference. They, with their desires and hopes, were simply brushed aside. They were good enough to win the war. They were not good enough to make the peace. That was reserved for prime ministers, acting under the pressure of the great interests, and for the diplomatic class.

The diplomatic class, however, does not work alone. Powerful sections of society have access to it, and exchange with it influences and ideas. Partly, these are the men of the same social class, the same school and college, those who constitute what is called in a special sense "society." All these are naturally solid together, and breathe, and create by their breathing, a single atmosphere. But society is always politically powerful, so that the diplomatic class is always well supported in the political world.

Next, and belonging to the same social class, are military and naval officers. The importance of these men in determining policy differs in different states. Probably it was greatest in pre-war Germany, and least in pre-war America. But wherever it is important, and in proportion as it is important, it must make for the perpetuation of war and of the policies that lead to war. For, in the first place, if a man has trained himself for war, he must, if he be serious and competent, desire to put his training into practice. For otherwise, what is the use of his life? Professional soldiers and professional sailors are, almost by definition, men who believe in war; believe, that is, that it is inevitable, that it is a fine profession and therefore that its evil cannot outweigh its good. To say this, is to attribute no iniquity to this class. Hindenburg, no doubt, and Ludendorf, along with their less prominent and uncompromising fellow-professionals in all countries, are good fathers of families, good patriots, brave, powerful and determined men. But the more they are all that, the more fatally are they opposed to the whole conception and ideal of

a world at peace. When Moltke said " Perpetual peace is a dream and a bad dream," he expressed the thought of every good soldier and sailor.

Professional officers, then, like professional diplomats, accept war as a necessary part of the system of things. But there is an important difference in the outlook of the two classes. The soldiers and sailors have actually to conduct both war and the preparation for it. They are thus brought continually into contact with the facts which the diplomats are able to ignore. They are bound to know what war really means, for they are giving it its meaning. Thus it is impossible for real soldiers and sailors to have any of the romantic illusions about war that take the place of experience and imagination in the minds of civilians. It is thus possible for these men to have a conversion,—that is, to come to see that war is a thing so evil that nothing can justify it, and that if society does not destroy it, it will destroy society. During the great war we have actual record of such conversions. One, for instance, is the German General Montgelas, selected by a peculiar irony, as one of the " War criminals " by the allied Governments. Another

is the naval Captain Persius. Another is the French General Verraux. And it might be possible to add one or two famous English names. If the terrible experience through which he must pass does manage to penetrate to the mind and heart of a soldier, he becomes, of all pacifists, the most convinced. For he has known and felt as no other has.

But this does not very often happen. And for reasons. It is the first business of a professional officer not to let it happen. For if he allowed himself to realise and to feel what it really is to which his life is devoted, he would have to abandon his profession. His instinct, therefore, is to turn away deliberately from all such thoughts. And this, not only in war time, but in time of peace, when, of course, it is much easier. He thus becomes a dual nature. On the one hand, he retains the ordinary habits and feelings of civilian life. He would not hurt a child. He is all good nature, kindness and helpfulness. On the other hand, he is training himself, and other people (and that is his real business) to inflict cruelties unimaginable on innumerable people unknown to him, not

men only, but women and little children. For, as he well knows, modern war makes no distinctions of civilian or soldier, age or sex. If he is in the air force, it is his work to accustom himself and others to the notion of dropping bombs into the midst of a helpless herded crowd.* If he is a gunner, the tank pre-occupies his mind and (like a recent expert on the subject) he contemplates a civilian population (whom he supposes to be "demanding war") "killed in a few minutes by tens of thousands." For the next war ("inevitable" of course) is to open with attacks "not against the enemy's army, but against the civil population, in order to compel it to accept the will of the attacker." Chivalry, mercy, a fair fight, all the apparatus of romance which still does duty among schoolboys, and is still served up, on occasion, in literature, or the cinema, or the press, all this the modern soldier knows to be nonsense. He knows that war means the greatest and most indiscriminate massacre possible of whole populations. He knows that no rules or conventions, even if

* It is generally agreed that air-raids on cities will be a principal feature of the next war. And air-raids do not select for slaughter soldiers or male adults.

such be drawn up, will ever be observed. He knows that victory will be to the most unscrupulous, the most pitiless, and the most ingenious. He knows that it is his duty to be that kind of man, and to create that kind of man. He knows that, if he stop for a moment to consider what this is that he is doing, to confront his professional with his private life, he is ruined. Thus, he has to arm himself against his own humanity and his own common sense. He has to regard the responsibility for war as resting elsewhere than on himself, and the fact that it is elsewhere taken as freeing him. He has, in a word, to view himself not as a man and a citizen, but as an instrument of destruction, and thus to make himself immune against the only energy that can extirpate war from the world, namely intellect prompted by humanity. For all this he may, as men choose, be admired or pitied or pardoned. What is said here has not been said in judgment. It has been said to bring out the fact that to maintain an officer class is to maintain a class of men who cannot work against war, and must work for it, unless they undergo a conversion that would shatter their whole life. So

that here, once more, we come back, by a new route, to the indisputable fact that to prepare for war is to perpetuate war. An army is not merely a military machine, it is an educational machine, and the object of its education is to extirpate from the minds and hearts of men any feelings and ideas that work against war, to reverse the motives and habits of civilian life, and to sterilise the mind against all influences which might counter-vail its training in scientific slaughter. Whether an army can effectively do that, or how effectively, may be open to question. That it is its object to do it, may be ascertained by anyone who will inquire into the methods adopted by the sergeants who drill raw recruits, or will turn over the pages of military handbooks. In peace time, it is true, this education is afterwards more or less counteracted, in the rank and file, by their necessary withdrawal into civilian life. But for the professional soldier there is nothing to counteract it, and whether he be admired for the fact or whether he be condemned, he can hardly escape becoming a permanent obstacle to any possiblity of improvement in human civilisation.

Yet bad though the case of these men be, through

the obligations of a profession which they may have chosen from the best of motives, it is yet better, in one way, than that of the politicians in time of war. For these have to maintain the cant. "We will not sheathe the sword" they say, and they must say it. For it would never do to say what would be the truth, "We will not cut off the poison gas, nor the bombs on undefended towns, nor the liquid fire, not the lice, nor the typhus, nor the dysentery, nor the slow starvation, by blockade, of millions of women and children." No, the fiction must be kept up! But what a fate is that of those who must keep it up!

To the classes thus directly responsible for the maintenance of war and war-policies must be added some great business interests. This, however, is a very complicated matter to disentangle. Trade and commerce, as a whole, do not profit, but lose, by war, and, in a general way, they are aware of that. Most likely what is called international finance works in the direction of peace, so far as it works at all in politics; and some patriots are its enemies precisely for that reason. And though, no doubt, in time of war, certain industries make enormous

profits, yet it would be unreasonable to suggest that they promote war in order to profit by it. On the other hand, there is at least one business which requires war, or, at any rate, the constant menace of war, to thrive at all, and that is the armament business. This business, therefore, has every motive of self-interest to work for war and against peace. It is internationally organised, so that shareholders in every country are making profits out of the munitions destined to be used against their own sons, and its existence has now been formally declared, in the Covenant of the League of Nations, to be " open to grave objections."

But it is in the economic expansion of states that business interests play the most questionable part. The main motives here have been already referred to. Capital wants an investment that will pay a high return; manufacturers want raw material and markets; concessionaires want cheap labour. And all these things they hope to find in countries economically undeveloped and unprotected by strong governments. The hope is not unreasonable, and is sometimes justified by the event. A great deposit of iron, of coal, of gold, of oil, or

whatever it may be, taken for nothing by force from primitive populations who do not know its value, may easily bring in high dividends to shareholders. Native populations, driven off the land and sufficiently taxed, may be compelled to give their labour at very low rates. They may possibly even be induced to "demand" European manufactured goods, and to abandon their own handicrafts. Thus, any given set of financiers or manufacturers or traders may really see and find profit in the seizure of African territories or in the opening up by force of Asiatic markets and resources. We should expect therefore to find that schemes of expansion are favoured not only by soldiers and imperialistic politicians, but by business interests. And in fact the history of expansion shows that that is usually the case. It is curious, even before the modern era, to note how trade and markets have always been a main motive of British wars, and a main cause of such popularity as those wars have achieved. But, during the last half century, this motive has been peculiarly prominent. And the combination of the respectable peer, the Company promoter, the trader, the

adventurer and the soldier has been behind the colonial enterprises of all countries from the eighties of the last century onward. The career of Mr. Cecil Rhodes is the classical example; for in him were blended all the motives which lie behind empire,—patriotism, cupidity, adventure, and the passion for domination and power.

The trouble, of course, is that this expansion cannot take place without war. It implies, first, war upon the natives. For however cunningly they may have been deceived into the grant of concessions, the time comes when the mask must be thrown off, and it must be made plain to them that they are to lose their lands, to abandon their traditional way of life, and to become workers in a semi-servile condition under white masters. That, however, it may be said, is a negligible matter. These native wars, after all, do not cost much, except to the natives, and if that were all it might plausibly be maintained that empire pays. Unfortunately, all states are playing the same game, so that friction is bound to arise. The friction may be allayed for a time by compromises and concessions. But it adds a main contribution to

the universal rivalry of power; till, at last, all is put to the stake in a great war, as a result of which the victor takes away the colonial territory of the vanquished, by way of "compensation" or "punishment."

At this point, has empire "paid" or no? Perhaps, after the late war, and its results, no one will have the audacity to answer the question in the affirmative, so clear is it that every nation individually, and all nations taken together, have lost, even in material values, infinitely more than there can be any reasonable hope that even the victors can ever regain. Statesmen and nations, if they mean to be good accountants, must set against the meagre profits of economic expansion, the whole of their war expenditure during the period of expansion. And a mere glance at the finance and trade of colonial dependencies shows how enormous the deficit must be.* Although, however, on pecuniary

* In the year 1913, the British exports to the whole of British tropical Africa (Somaliland, East Africa, Uganda, Nyassaland, Gambia, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria) were one per cent. of the whole, and the imports from those territories less than one per cent. Our trade with India, of course, is important. But who can do the sum which consists in calculating the expense of the long series of wars we have waged to secure our communications with India, against the hypothetical diminution of our trade with that country, if it were occupied by a State

balance, the nation loses, beyond all computation, given interests and individuals may gain. It may therefore be expected that, so long as present policies continue, there will always be, behind schemes of expansion, financiers and business men, and the activities of such men must be reckoned in among the forces working for war. If men could or would think things through, from the beginning to the bitter end, it would be seen clearly that the profits made by these enterprises are made out of the life-blood of the sons of those who engaged upon them. But not so do men think, nor so feel. And it would be unjust to lay upon these patriotic-feeling expansionists the condemnation that would rest upon them if they knew what they did.

We see then that the tradition of the diplomatic class, the professional attitude of soldiers and sailors, and the pecuniary interest of certain business men, work together to maintain the pursuit of power as the policy of states. These

protecting against us? The self-governing Dominions do not come into this argument. But it is very questionable whether we should do less trade with them, if they were not part of the British Empire.

classes and interests form a kind of social block, moving in the circle of their own ideas, and permeating one another with them. They may be called, collectively, the governing class. It is not a class whose membership is fixed. New men constantly rise into it, and others go out. But what is, or has been, fixed, is the point of view—power and wealth the object, war, in the last resort, the instrument. It is this governing class that forms policies and carries them out behind the scenes, admitting the Public to its confidence, or to so much of it as seems desirable, only at moments of crisis when passions must be played upon and the people brought upon the stage. This " people," the great mass, that is, of the uninitiated, who pursue their daily work and play, until the trumpet of doom blows from the heaven of their rulers,—these must be regarded as victims and dupes, not accomplices, in the great game. But though that be so, yet the masses must bear their responsibility, seeing that it is their passions, instincts and emotions that respond to the call when it is made. The whole state of mind of the crowd is one of the fundamental causes of war.

And, first, we must note that in the crowd must be included the majority of the educated and well-to-do. Very few people take any interest in foreign policy; very few even attempt to follow it through its underground channels or to infer its course from the chance emergence of the stream at this point or that. Most people therefore, educated or no, are, in this matter, a mob. They follow passion not reason, sentiment not interest, words not things. We come back here upon what we have called the community-sense, undiluted, uninstructed, unenlightened by reason or by knowledge. Unable to direct itself, it follows the direction of its leaders and these are members of the governing class, acting through the platform and the press. For information, and (what is equally important) for the way in which information is presented, the crowd is at the mercy of these influences. It is governed by words; and the words serve not to express and inform thought, but to release passion. It matters little whether or no what is said is couched in the form of a logical argument. Some readers demand this, others do not. But, if argument be supplied, it is passion that dictates

both the premises and the conclusions. For once a crisis has broken out between nations, it becomes an axiom on each side, that the other nation is in the wrong. Some want reasons why it is in the wrong, most do not. But no one wants or will tolerate reasons why it may be right. The colossal egotism of the herd at this point takes charge, and any reasoning that can gain a hearing is but sophistry to justify that.

This analysis is not refuted by the fact that nations, in such crises, are capable of generous emotions as well as of the reverse. Egotism can always be generous, when it is contemplating the victims and the crimes of an enemy. What tests it, is its own victims and its own crimes. The very same passion which transports a people at war with fury at the iniquities of its enemies, is turned at once against a candid friend who may seek to expose those of itself or its allies. The righteousness of a nation is self-righteousness. And though it prefers (like all egotists) to cover up its emotions in fine-sounding words, it will never allow idealism to divert it from the course of its own interest and desires. All this is so instinctive that it would be

unjust to charge it to hypocrisy. For hypocrisy implies deliberation and self-control, and here all is primitive passion. The inconsistencies between the words of nations and their deeds, between their avowed intentions and their actual accomplishment, between what they profess in conflict, and what they do in victory, runs through the whole course of history. If the reader requires particular illustration, let him compare the declarations of the allied nations during the war of 1914, with their action in the treaties they dictated to vanquished foes.

It would be idle to blame men for having this kind of mind and soul, which they inherit from the animal world. But it is, at bottom, because they have it that wars are possible. For the people, after all, are the great reservoir of force, and governments can only act by and through them. One might compare nations to patients liable to outbreaks of homicidal mania, but normally sane, kindly, helpful and productive. Certain words, rashly spoken, are known to bring on the attacks. Wise and humane keepers would, therefore, avoid speaking them. But the keepers of nations,—

governments and governing classes—forget or despise this counsel. In thoughtlessness, in misconception, in ambition, in fear, or, it may be, in wickedness, they speak the words. The catastrophe follows, and the patients, falling upon one another, fight till they drop. Bled to sanity, at last they rise heavily from the dust, to lead again, if they may, the human life. But still the old poison is working in them, the old keepers watching and waiting. And when the word is spoken again, once more they will be at one another's throats.

It follows, from the situation thus described, that a government can always reckon on the support of the people for a war, once the war can be presented as "inevitable." It follows also that it will be very difficult for them to make a good peace, even if they want to, and very easy to make a bad one. For though the mass of the people, in every nation, may, in a general way, desire a settlement which will prevent future wars, yet they are neither instructed about the conditions necessary to the attainment of such a peace nor ready to sacrifice to it the passions engendered by war. A victorious nation may want a good peace. But

it wants, still more revenge and indemnity. And it does not see that it is precisely the taking of those things that makes future wars inevitable. When the British electorate, in December, 1918, voted for the Kaiser's head and the cost of the war, they voted away the possibility of a good peace. They were, of course, less guilty than the politicians who seized the most critical moment in our history and in the history of the world, to lay such policies before them. They hoped, no doubt, and intended to have, nevertheless, the peace that would end war. But, if not guilty, they were none the less responsible. For it was their passion, their confusion of mind, their ignorance, their impatience, their refusal, all through the war, to listen to cold and wholesome truth, that encouraged politicians to approach them in that spirit and discouraged them from approaching them in any other. They have been duped, no doubt, they have been cheated, they have been betrayed. Yes! By their governments! Yes! But also by their own passions.

The passionateness, then, of the mass of men in their dealing with other nations, their falling back at once on the blind community-sense, is a

principal part of their responsibility for war. Perhaps not less contributory is their levity. When war is over, all they want is to forget it. Instead of taking the opportunity, when the tension and strain is past, to look back in cold blood on all that has occurred, to trace causes and effects, to estimate evils and goods, they put all that behind them and turn to pleasure, to business, to domestic politics, to anything rather than learning the lesson of the experience through which they have passed. That this is natural does not alter its significance, nor obviate its consequences. Until men can learn by experience there is little hope that they will ever emerge from the vicious circle of unnecessary war and unstable peace. We have before us, at this moment, such a lesson as has never been given to the world before. We have seen prodigies of sacrifice, miracles of courage, unimaginable depths of suffering and heights of devotion ; we have seen a prodigality and riot of the best and the worst that is in man ; and all this goodness and all this badness we have seen directed to internecine destruction in the name of certain abstract principles. Those who stood for the principles have won. They have had

power to do what they liked with the world. Triumphant force has been given a free hand to see what it can do to establish Right. What is the result? A scene of ruin, an orgy of hatred, a debauch of cupidity, a deployment of hypocrisy unequalled by anything yet presented in the tragic annals of mankind. These are the fruits of war. Nor will any devotion nor any heroism on the part of those fighting ever cause the fruits to be other. Have we learned the lesson? Do we even know that the lesson is there to be learned? No! We are jazzing, and racing and mobbing Mary Pickford.

Chapter V

REMEDIES

This essay is concerned with the causes, not with the cure of international war. But a comprehension of the causes is important only because it is a condition of the cure. A few concluding words may, therefore, be appropriately devoted to remedies.

These fall under two heads; the creation of judicial and administrative machinery, and the adoption of a new outlook and policy. These must go together, if either is to be effective. But the latter is more important, and more difficult, than the former. The machinery, indeed, has already been created. That is the one good work of the Peace Conference. And as, in previous pages, I have had occasion to speak in condemnation of the statesmen there assembled, so I would here pay a full tribute to them for a great achievement. In creating the League of Nations, they showed

themselves far-sighted, pacific and humane. If and when the states at present excluded are admitted to the League, if and when it is permitted to take the place at present occupied by the Supreme Council, it will have the opportunity of constituting, maintaining and developing a world at peace.

But a League of Nations of which the component States should be pursuing the old power-policies would be a contradiction in terms. The creation of the League is nothing, and worse than nothing, unless the governments and the peoples who support them are to be directed by a new spirit. And there is little evidence at present that such a spirit is at work among those who are actually controlling affairs. The governments of all the great states are still pursuing imperialistic policies, as though the League did not exist, and where these policies are concerned, they refuse to let the League function. Thus, when Poland attacked Russia in April, 1920, a case had arisen of the kind contemplated by article 11 of the Covenant. It was the clear duty of the Council of the League to take action. No action was taken, for the principal allies did not desire action to be taken.

And they did not desire it because Poland was their ally, and because powerful elements in their own governments had been actively supporting the Polish offensive. The Covenant of the League constitutes a solemn international obligation. Yet already the states that profess to stand for international right have infringed its spirit, if not its letter. Some organs of the press indeed assume, as a matter of course, that the Covenant must be ignored, if it is inconvenient to the signatories to observe it. Thus the *Temps*, that representative exponent of cynical imperialism, when Persia appealed to the League for protection against alleged aggression by Russia (June, 1920) argued that the League should decline to act, because its principal members would not think it worth while to take risks for Persia. Yet Persia is a member of the League and entitled by Treaty to its protection.

Let us take another example of the dealings of the principal Allied States with the Covenant. No article in that document is more important than number 22, which deals with the system of mandates. The intention of this article is to

convert annexations of territory by the victors in the late war into mandates held under the League. The territories in question are to be held in trust for the " well-being and development " of the inhabitants. The intention of the article is plain. The mandatory State is to look after the interests of the population entrusted to it, not after its own. It follows that it should not seek pecuniary or material benefit for itself. Its trust is to be a burden, not an advantage. It might therefore be supposed that there would be no great competition for the post of mandatory, and that the obligation would be assumed reluctantly as a duty, not covetously, as an opportunity. What has happened?

Let us take the case of the Turkish Empire. By the Peace Treaty the Turks are to be deprived of the greater part of their territory. How has it been disposed of? According to Treaties drawn up during the war, before the mandatory system or a League of Nations was heard of, and conceived frankly on the old imperialistic lines. The mandates are being assigned to the States by themselves, not by the League, and they

themselves are drawing up the terms of their own trusteeship. Britain is to have Palestine and Mesopotamia, France, Syria and Cilicia, Italy, Adalia, and so on. And no concealment is made of the fact that, in all these territories, what interests the self-appointed mandatories is the material resources involved. Why, for instance are the British taking Mesopotamia ? From a disinterested desire to benefit the Arabs, our paternal care of whom we are showing, at the moment of this writing, by killing them with bombs and machine guns?* He must be very credulous or very ignorant of the ways of states who can believe it. It is not even strategical considerations that move us ; for if it were, we should be content

* Article 22, says, referring to the Turkish territories, " the wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the mandatory state." The Arabs of Mesopotamia and of Syria are showing, in the most conclusive way they can, that is by armed resistance, that they do not want the English nor the French. The latter indeed, at the moment of this writing, have sent an ultimatum to the Syrian Arabs, demanding that they accept the French as their mandatory under threat of war. Thus do governments interpret their obligations. This governmental cynicism and duplicity is so profound and so much a matter of course, that people hardly even attend to it. Yet it has already gone far to destroy the promise of the League of Nations, and to ruin the future peace of the world.

to hold the head of the Persian gulf, as we had arranged to do by the Treaty with Germany, drawn up in 1914. No! The lure is the oil. We are, indeed, told that this oil is to belong to the Arab State. But that is "subject to any arrangements that were made before the war with Turkey." And before the war, Turkey had granted a concession of all of the oil of Bagdad and Mosul to a British Company. The ownership of the Arab State presumably will be confined to the power of taxing the company to pay for the administration.

One reason then, we may fairly say, why we are taking Mesopotamia is that a British Company may exploit the oil.

But here there is involved a yet more important point. According to the Covenant, the conditions of a mandate are to be such as will secure "equal opportunities for the trade and commerce of other members of the league."* In the case of the

* The wording of Article 22 is deplorably and perhaps purposely ambiguous. Thus it can, and probably will, be maintained that the words quoted in the text apply only to African territory and not to Asiatic. In that case the British and the French would not be breaking the letter of the Covenant if they established in the territories of the late Turkish Empire a trading and commercial monopoly. But they would none the less be

Mesopotamian oil, that would imply that neither the British Government nor British subjects would be granted any differential opportunity for the purchase of the oil, either in matter of price or in matter of prior claim. It may be that that position will be maintained by the British Government. But we have reason for anxiety. For, in another case, the government has already adopted the contrary policy. Among the territories for which the British have granted themselves a mandate is a little island in the Pacific called Naura. This island is rich in phosphates, and, according to the spirit, if not the letter, of Article 22, these phosphates should be offered on equal terms to all nations members of the League. What in fact has happened is, that the sale of the

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infringing the spirit. For the object of the Covenant is to prevent war, and a principal cause of war is the creation of such exclusive national privileges. If territories seized by one state are to be closed economically to others, then states are bound to fight for territories rich in industrial resources. The same observation applies to the case of the island of Nauru referred to below. It is open to the British to say (as they have done) that this mandate is held under the sixth clause of Article 22, and that therefore the condition of equal commercial opportunity does not apply to it. None the less, the action they have taken is a breach of the spirit of the Covenant.

phosphates is to be restricted to the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, unless there be any surplus over and above what they require; and that these countries are to have the right to receive them at cost price. Here, is a clear case of economic imperialism of the worst kind. A territory is seized by war and then the political power of the State seizing it is employed to give that State a preferential claim on its principal raw material, so that it can either exclude all other nations altogether, or charge them a monopoly price. Such a policy is a war policy. For it shows every State that its only security for access to materials is to seize and occupy the territory where they are to be found. It was the clear intention of the mandatory system to put an end to such practices. And here is a British Government introducing them, for the first time, into the British system. The precedent of course will be imitated elsewhere. A coach and four has thus already been driven through one of the most important Clauses of the Covenant. The whole affair is disreputable. But perhaps its most disreputable feature is the speaking in

support of the government in the House of Commons. Member after member rose in his place to declare, in effect, that he regarded the solemn international treaty constituting the League as a scrap of paper. One even went so far as to emit the following sentence, worth recording as an example of the political morals of Empire. "On the matter of the League of Nations I think it (the Bill) is a violation of the Covenant, but on the ground of imperial needs, and the necessity for procuring this tremendous and vital product, I shall be inclined to support the government."* And these are the people who professed to the world that they were fighting, a "war for Right." Oh! young men dead in your millions, for what then and for *whom* has your blood been shed!

It will, perhaps, be said, in extenuation, that this business of oil and phosphates has been exaggerated, and that after all the real concern of the States that are giving themselves mandates is with the interests of the native populations whom they are to protect. Well, this contention can be tested by a typical case, that of Armenia. Here, if anywhere, the

* See *Hansard*, vol. 130, No. 78, p. 1337.

conditions contemplated by Article 22 exist. Here is a population which has been decimated by massacre again and again. A million were exterminated by the Turks during the war, and the Allied nations made it a special charge against the Germans that they did not intervene effectively to prevent it. Well, Turkey surrendered to the Allies. They could have made any terms they liked about Armenia. They could have insisted on its evacuation by the Turkish troops, and have occupied the whole territory by their own. But their interests lay otherwhere, in those regions which they had marked out for economic exploitation. The British withdrew from Cilicia, because that province had been assigned to the French by the agreement. The French occupied it, willingly enough, for they had economic interests there. But they had none in the rest of Armenia, which is poor in natural resources, and they did not extend their occupation thither. Massacres recommenced almost under the eyes of the French troops, who seem to have attempted no effective resistance, and who, at the moment of this writing, are withdrawing altogether, leaving the Armenians

at the mercy of the Turkish nationalists. Meantime, no mandate has yet been accepted by anyone for these unhappy people. With characteristic cynicism the Supreme Council offered it to the Council of the League. That Council replied in the only way it could. It suggested that it would endeavour to find a State to undertake the mandate, but that it would be glad to be informed what forces and funds would be at the disposal of such a state. Thereupon the Supreme Council, with elegant irony, offered the mandate to the United States. "We have distributed among ourselves," they said, in effect, "all the lucrative parts of the Turkish Empire. There remains Armenia, a territory whose protection will require a considerable expenditure of men and money, and from which unfortunately no return can be expected. We ourselves require all the troops and resources we can afford to protect our oil and other material interests in the late Turkish Empire*! We have done

* The British are maintaining in Mesopotamia a force of 80,000 troops at an estimated cost of at least £35,000 per annum. All this we can do in our own supposed interest. But we cannot spare a man or a shilling to save the Armenians from massacre—we who have "troubled deaf heaven with our bootless cries," again and again, on this subject, and have made

all we can. It is now your turn to assume your responsibility to humanity." This agreeable offer the Americans unaccountably declined. And the mandate for the Armenians is still to seek. Perhaps before it is found, there will be no Armenians left to enjoy it.

So much for the "sacred trust for civilisation" contemplated in Article 22. There is nothing wrong with the Article. What is wrong, is the spirit of the Allied Governments, and of the classes and interests that dictate their policy. After the war, as before it, these are inspired by economic imperialism of the crudest kind. And while that is the case, the Covenant of the League can never be anything more than a piece of solemn hypocrisy. But of this economic imperialism Great Britain is a principal exponent. There has been much talk in England of Italian and French Imperialism. Fiume and the Saar Valley have bulked large on our horizon. But how little has been said of our own appropriation of East and West German

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it a special count against the Germans that they did not stop the massacres at a time when they had no troops in the Turkish Empire, and no possibility of taking any there.

Africa, of Palestine and Mesopotamia, not to mention the protectorate of Egypt, and what will certainly be a hegemony over Persia and Arabia. All that we took quietly, as if it were a matter of course. And what case had we, then, to protest against the more moderate imperialism of other states? They would only have laughed at us, as perhaps they did. Let us admit the truth. Above internationalism, above peace, and at the cost of war, all that is powerful in England values the continued expansion of the British Empire. If ever there were a people who might fairly be accused of making a bid for world dominion, that people is the British. Now, let it be clearly understood, the continued expansion of the British Empire is incompatible with the peace of the world. For it can only be expanded at the cost of other Empires, that is by war. If a League of Nations is to be a reality, the ideal of Empire must disappear, and its place be taken by the opposite ideal—the peaceful co-operation of all states and nations in the interests of a common world-civilisation.

But this conclusion is unwelcome, if not

intolerable to the governing classes of all nations, and not least to that of this country. Their tradition, their education, their pride, their interest, all work against it. The imperialism of the wealthy and aristocratic sections of the English, of the army, the navy, the church, the public schools, to a great extent the universities, is so direct, so simple, so unamenable to discussion and argument, as to resemble an instinct. There is no evidence that the war has done anything to it, except to enhance it. As to the League of Nations, these classes either are frankly hostile to it or they regard it as a device to consolidate the Empire by stabilising the *status quo* after it has been made as favourable as possible to British power. While that kind of spirit animates governing classes, the League simply cannot function.

It is the sense of this irreconcilable hostility of the governing class to the only conditions that can give us a world at peace that is leading so many people to turn, for their only hope, to Labour. A hope, it is, but not a certainty. For, as we have noticed in a previous chapter, the passions, good and bad, of the peoples, make them easy dupes of

imperialism. Their leaders indeed, in all countries see the truth clearly. But it must be doubted whether the rank and file do. A great work of education has here to be done. Internationalists must contend with imperialists for the mind and soul of the peoples. Imperialists have at their disposal the money, the press, the innumerable agencies of corruption and intrigue. Above all they have, if they choose, one great bribe to offer. They may go to the working class and say :—" We offer you a tribute Empire. Black men, yellow men, brown men, shall slave throughout the world to give you cheap raw materials. We will share the spoils with you—honestly, we will ! We will all grow rich together at the price of their poverty. Let us stop this idle wasteful fighting with one another. Let us join hands to exploit our subject peoples." Of course, it is not thus that it will be put. But its cynicism, its folly and its wickedness will not prevent its being put in some more plausible form. Before the working people are secured for internationalism, they will have to stand up against a deadly assault of imperialism upon their predatory instincts.

Nothing will enable them to resist such an assault except education. But how is that education to be given? It is natural to think, in this connection, of the public educational system, of the schools and colleges maintained or assisted by the State. But there are difficulties here. There is no greater danger to democracy than a deliberate system of governmental education in morals and politics. It might, indeed, be used for good, but equally and more probably, it might be used for evil. It seems essential to liberty and progress that such subjects either be not taught in government-controlled schools, or, if they be taught, that the teachers should have full liberty to teach according to their convictions.

To exclude the subjects from the curriculum, even if desirable, would not really solve the difficulty, for every lesson in history or political geography or literature, will carry with it the teacher's point of view, even though he may not intend to communicate it. Freedom for teachers, with all the risks of freedom, seems to be the true alternative. And if there is to be any entry to the schools directly or indirectly, for propaganda, it

should be impartially extended to all serious and reputable views. The problem will not be easy to solve, but it cannot be further discussed in this place. What has been said must suffice to indicate its nature.

There remains the press, the platform and the book. The press is perhaps the most powerful agent of propaganda ever created, and it is the more powerful the more it operates by indirection and suggestion. It is one of the most curious and disquieting facts of modern society that this great agency of education should be controlled by men who openly profess that they have no object except to make money and no training in any art but that. For the peace of the world and the security of civilisation no reform would be more important than one which should make the press a profession instead of a branch of commerce, and its editors men of knowledge, science and humanity, with a sense of responsibility for the consequences of their teaching. There are still a few such in England, but the succession of them seems to be in grave peril. Yet among the able young men constantly being recruited for

the press there must be some with the capacity to be apostles. One of these perhaps will arise to reform the press as once the Friars reformed the church.

The platform is open to all parties and all causes. It must always be a potent source of education, good or bad. And in this place we need not speak further of it. But of the book a few words must be said. It is already, and may become still more, a powerful instrument of popular education. But, to be so, it must be cheap, and it must be deliberately written for and distributed to the thinking members of the working class. What a large demand there is among these for serious literature is becoming daily more and more evident by actual experiment. It is that demand that workers for peace must set themselves to satisfy. They must rewrite the history and politics of the past and the present in the light of the international ideal. They must destroy the romantic illusions, and insist upon the hard plain facts. They must return again and again, from every angle of approach, to the fundamental problem of war and peace. They must treat war as a

problem not an axiom, a catastrophe not a glory, a disease to diagnose not an achievement to idealise. A generation of hard and sober work of this kind might conceivably revolutionise international policy. For it is only by convincing the reason of men that it is possible to impart a steady direction to their action. The way is laborious and difficult. But there is no other.

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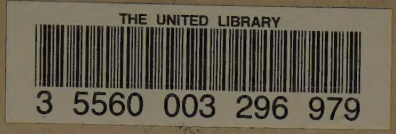

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